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Then and Now: Food for Health

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Then and Now: Food for Health

> *"Look backward in life for guidance, to the present and future for opportunity."*

—Anonymous

Food for Health

University of Alabama nutritionist Dr. E. Cheraskin tells us:

> "The best Bicentennial celebration of all would be for Americans to go back to eating the way the colonists did 200 years ago. The colonial diet was much lower in calories and carbohydrates, and it was much higher in nutrients. What's more, their food was naturally fresh—it had none of the preservatives and coloring agents which we now know are harmful. There's absolutely no doubt in my mind that 200 years ago people thrived on a much healthier diet."

Our history reveals that the colonists ate heartily of a diet consisting of protein, animal fat, crude pressed oils and some carbohydrates. Wild game was plentiful and often served in lieu of their domestically raised poultry, beef, mutton, and pork. The meals also included, as desired, animal byproducts such as milk, cream, butter, eggs, and cheese. Honey, sorghum, molasses, or maple syrup served as sweeteners. Home-baked whole grain bread, vegetables, fruits, berries, and nuts were considered necessary to furnish a variety of protein or, as they called it, stick-to-the-ribs food. Some of their food combinations, sometimes called "Grandma's vittles," are described by Lou Guthrie of Houston, Texas, in the September issue of *Healthways Magazine*, as follows:

> ***Good Eatin'***
>
> *Lusty food, hearty food,*
> *Good for the soul:*
> *Collards cooked with fat-back;*
> *Black-eyed peas and jowl.*
> *Ham hocks and sauerkraut,*
> *String beans and old ham-bones,*
> *Chicken stew with dumplings,*
> *And crunchy corn pones.*
> *Eat 'till you're satisfied,*
> *Hearty foods like these*
> *Keep you feeling healthy,*
> *Drives away disease!*

These grandmas and all the great-grandmas and great-great-grandmas before them never heard of a balanced diet or of cholesterol but managed to keep everyone healthy by supplying them with *naturally balanced food*. They did not have to ask the question, is it harmful? Their only interest was in its nutritional benefit. Their choice of foods supported an active, strenuous life, often cut short by battles, duels, and accidents but probably first and foremost by poor hygienic and sanitary conditions. Apparently, the incidence of heart attack was low or almost nonexistent. And constipation, the practically "all American" affliction of today, was seldom a problem. Their food furnished sufficient balance and roughage to aid nature by stimulating natural peristalsis. The bran fiber in the whole grain bread and the fibrous nature of raw vegetables furnished sufficient roughage to move the bowels regularly. Grandma also knew that the pectin in raw bran and in grated raw apples served as normalizers for those who occasionally suffered from diarrhea.

Scientists have found out that it is only after sugar and other concentrated carbohydrates have become available that primitive tribes acquire habitual constipation. And, like the rest of us, they also become candidates for heart conditions. Lack of wholesome nourishing food and insufficient sane exercise has contributed to the heart and vascular conditions now rated as the number one killer in this country.

Past Events

Our early colonists were generally unaware of the many pathological conditions to which we have become heir. Coronary thrombosis, which today accounts for more deaths than any other illness, was unknown *then*. It is *now* a recorded statistical fact that present common heart conditions were not diagnosed until early in the twentieth century in either a living patient or at autopsy. It is quite apparent that our early settlers did not die of the diseases that some modern doctors, dieticians, and biased industrially oriented scientists warn us are caused by the so-called cholesterol-rich foods they designate as fat meat, butter, eggs, and cheese. And so, based on nineteenth-century thinking they have foisted on the consumer completely engineered substitutes, some of which when tested contained more cholesterol than the natural product.

This concept of nutrition entirely ignores the contemporary reality of loss of nutriments through modern processing and agribusiness. Nutritionist Dr. Jean Mayer, the new president of Tufts University, recently stated: "I doubt that we shall be able to trust entirely engineered diets before 2001—if then."

Going back further into history we find that the regimen of foods the colonists ate has been handed down through our ancestors for thousands of years. Many of them chewed the softened bones of fowl, cracked open the long bones of animals to obtain the fresh bone marrow, and had apparently learned from carnivorous animals to prefer the mineral-rich glandular tissues to the muscle meat. Without expert guidance they had to rely on what modern physicians call old wives' tales. However, if our ancestors had not lived healthily, we would not be here to have some of us, through modern manipulated technocracy, mess up our foods and abuse the healthy heritage they provided and preserved for us.

As Aldous Huxley has stated: "Technological progress has merely provided us with a more efficient means for going backward."

Modern Aspect

Apparently, this is true in regard to nutrition at this time. Dr. Michael J. Walsh comments as follows: "In the old days, before all this mechanization, and life was very strenuous, it was easy to get the necessary grams of protein."

Today we find that fractionated food creates fractional health due to the fact that the recommended diet is grossly deficient in vital elements. It is preposterous to assume that the essential nutriments remain in processed food or that only a few soil minerals are necessary for growth and/or maintenance. In fact, a Surgeon-General directive stated: "American diets, when deficient at all, are most likely to be deficient in minerals and vitamins."

The probable reason? Another government report stated: "For ages rain has fallen on the land leaching out large quantities of soluble constituents, for the most part, mineral salts, and carrying them down the streams and rivers to the ocean."

Nevertheless, the consensus of orthodox medical opinion and some industrial PhDs is that if they were there thirty-five or forty years ago, they must still be there. At that time only a few minerals were considered to be nutrients. Since then scientists have found more and that many of them are required in a specific ratio.

Because of modern education, which features the niceties of life in lieu of nutritional knowledge, we find the mineral-rich glands much neglected with the exception of liver, often prescribed as a source of organic iron for anemic individuals. Occasionally, the thyroid gland material is prescribed as a source of iodine. We seldom hear of glandular foods such as kidney stew, lung soup, pickled heart, Rocky Mountain oysters, brain, thymus (upper sweetbread), and pancreas (lower sweetbread). The prostate, gonads, and sweetbreads are excellent sources of zinc. Only recently zinc was found to be a determining factor and a new clue as regards the zinc-copper relationship to coronary conditions. An insufficiency of zinc in the pancreas may possibly indicate why diabetics are more prone to heart conditions.

As Dr. McCarrison stated: "Incomplete foods upset mineral regulation of the endocrine system through crippling, of one or more glands, by mineral deficiency and as a possible result encouraging disease and advancing senility."

Mineral Action Updated

Recently, a metabolic imbalance associated with hypertension appeared as a new clue in the increased risk of coronary disease. The imbalance of two essential trace minerals, zinc and copper, apparently is a common factor. This link has been identified by Dr. Leslie M. Klevay, a scientist at USDA's Human Nutrition Laboratory in Grand Forks, ND, and reported in the *Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Volume 28, No. 7, July 1975. Dr. Klevay inferred that by varying the levels of zinc and copper in diets, as was done with laboratory rats, the serum cholesterol levels could be varied. He is not yet sure why the mineral balance should be so important to the circulatory system. However, he found it related to the mortality rates due to coronary heart disease in forty-seven U.S. cities, in proportion to the ratio of zinc and copper in the cow's milk available to those cities. He also found that the ratio of zinc to copper in human milk is lower and that infants nursed longer than one month developed less coronary atherosclerosis than those who were never nursed.

Apparently, the hard work and regular exercise of our forbearers aided in their mineral balances. Dr. Klevay determined that sweat, in addition to the other known salts, contained about sixteen times more zinc than copper; its production thus causes a loss of more zinc than copper, resulting in a lower ratio. We have previously mentioned that a high content of calcium and magnesium in hard water tends to reduce the buildup of cholesterol in the blood serum. Dr. Klevay presumes this is due to the calcium moving zinc out of the liver, the cholesterol-producing organ, thereby reducing the ratio of zinc to copper. His theory makes sense, as calcium carbonate and calcium phosphate are known to act as biocatalysts with copper, zinc, magnesium, iron, and possibly other trace minerals in the formation of enzymes and the promotion of ion exchange. No doubt, the enzymes are necessary in this promotion.

Dr. Emil Ginter, a nutritional researcher from Czechoslovakia, found that vitamin C in the diet is necessary to stimulate the liver enzymes in order to convert cholesterol to bile acids.

Robert Henkin, a scientist with the National Heart and Lung Institute, has recently determined that deficiencies of copper, zinc and other minerals were causes of poor appetites through loss of taste and smell, in some people. He believes that a zinc deficiency problem, in some areas, is one of the major undiagnosed diseases we have today. He says: "Most physicians do not know the role of metals in the human body, or how to make sophisticated measurements of trace elements."

Trace elements have been described as nutriments such as minerals and vitamins in remarkably small amounts, or only a trace.

Recent Discoveries

A relatively recent addition to the list of essential trace minerals is chromium. Scientists believe it to be a nutritional aid in enhancing the effects of insulin. Also, a recent experiment with animals indicates that depriving them of chromium tends to buildup the thick fatty deposits on the inner walls of their blood vessels, so often attributed to eating animal fats. Good food sources of chromium are animal proteins, whole grain products, and brewer's yeast.

We have also found out that tiny amounts of selenium must be present in the human system for normal body function. Drs. Raymond J. Shamberger and Charles E. Willis, biochemists at the Cleveland Clinic, presented the results of their study at a recent meeting of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology. Their study showed that people living in geographical areas where selenium is found naturally in *low* concentrations have three times the high blood pressure death rates, including heart attacks, aneurysms, and strokes, as contrasted to high-selenium areas. In his presentation Dr. Shamberger stated:

> "We do not know selenium's precise action concerning high blood pressure, but our study strongly suggests that it has a beneficial effect on high blood pressure problems in man, similar to that produced in laboratory animals at other research centers. Indeed, the effect appears to be dramatic."

Low-selenium areas in the U.S. are the Northwest, Northeast, and Southeast. High-selenium areas include the Southwest, Great Plains, and much of the Midwest. Trace amounts are found in soil, plants, and animals—that is, if we are lucky enough to live in the right area and food processing has not robbed us of these essentials for health.

This basic fact is brought home to us by Professor Curtis Shears' remark: "Soil and fertilization make the plant and animal; the resultant food makes man." However, should the soil be eroded or compacted through chemical fertilization and not able to supply these foods with sufficient trace elements, then we are the ones to suffer.

At a recent meeting of the American Chemical Society in New York, another mineral element, molybdenum, was reported to play a role in the lives of plants and animals. It has been one of the most obscure and least understood minerals, but now it appears to be the key in the operation of enzymes, controlling such processes as the formation of urine and the fixation of nitrogen. Further information and understanding of its function could lead to its application in heart conditions and gout. Presently molybdenum supplements are being commercially produced to increase productivity in soils found lacking in this essential element.

Cell Health

Now that the NPK binge has been curtailed by the energy crisis, wayward scientists are beginning to realize that balancing the known soil minerals, as originally provided by nature, is necessary to furnish needed enzymes for bodily cell maintenance and replacement. Minerals are considered to be the catalyzing agent in enzyme production systems, in conjunction with a synergistic vitamin complex and the amino acids of various proteins. It is this balanced unity that provides the dynamic action for healthy body cell replacement through nutrient assimilation. Conversely, missing components create metabolic problems resulting in ill health. By stressing greater quantity production and more for less, our present technology has created many problems of imbalance in the nutrition of our soil, plants, animals, and ourselves.

For example, Dr. Darwin Prockop of the Department of Medicine and Biochemistry, University of Pennsylvania, advises that iron is involved in the metabolism of connective tissue. He says: "Collagen in connective tissue is synthesized by a series of steps involving a precursor of collagen called protocollagen."

Iron is a required constituent in the hydroxylation of protocollagen. Iron is considered abundant in soil but becomes exhausted if the soil is overworked or overfertilized. Then too, it becomes unavailable to plants if the soil has been subjected to chemical fertilizers, which in effect bind up the iron. Livestock feeding on the resulting grass become anemic. Humans depending on this meat as a source of iron also may become anemic.

Early in the twentieth century Pfeffer's experiments with soil minerals proved that in the absence of iron the development of chlorophyll did not take place. This green coloring matter of the plant corresponds to the red coloring matter of the blood. Just as without chlorophyll there can be no plant life, so without hemoglobin there can be no animal life. He found that both depend on iron for their existence. It is generally known that iron is a constituent of red blood cells, but not so well known that copper, cobalt, and manganese are needed in forming good red blood. Manganese is usually considered to be more linked with ligamentous tissue but the iron-copper combination has been found to be necessary in the building of collagen in all cells. Cobalt has been found to be vital to the maturing of red blood cells. Any excess of iron in the body is stored in the liver, bone marrow, and spleen for future use.

It is doubtful our ancestors knew why the glands and bone marrow were good food, but we must consider them to have been knowledgeable. It is only recently that scientists determined that certain glands are the storehouse for specific minerals, that is, other than the liver and thyroid. But then, the physiological study of the body has been very misunderstood and slow to develop. For instance, iron was recognized as an important factor in the function of blood very early. It was not until 1628 that William Harvey, an English physiologist, discovered the mechanism of the circulation of the blood. In the study of only this one system of the body, it was not until the twentieth century that the dietary use of liver was recommended for hypochromic anemia. It was determined that about 85 percent of the iron may be recycled after the liver and spleen have broken down the worn-out blood cells. The lifespan of the red blood cells is an average of 120 days. It is quite obvious that the lost iron and other minerals must be replaced by the food we eat.

Some medical clinicians attempt to do this by prescribing an inorganic iron salt. However, this method, in many instances, has a gastronomic repercussion. Some nutritional scientists have determined that only by passing through the phenomenon of plant life can inorganic minerals, in *sufficient amount*, become organic elements or colloids and enter into the general metabolic process of the animal and/or human body. They say that mineral unbalance in the soil affects our health more than suspected or medically recognized.

Cause and Effect

Any effect must be preceded by a cause, and this applies to all earthly phenomena including the many and varied manifestations that may be produced in our body under different circumstances. We live in a world of cause and effect, so non-nutritional food surely must affect the maintenance and/or proper cell growth of our body. By treating this effect with aspirin or other drugs, instead of furnishing the body with more wholesome nutrients, we may cause a further adverse effect terminating in disease or abnormal functioning of some specific organ. Our present level of science allows functional replacement of heart and kidney action through transplantation. The situation is similar to, through wrong advice, using a poor grade of oil in the motor of your car and having to replace the motor due to malfunction. It is a very expensive calamity and, in either case, the replacement may not be as satisfactory as the original.

Apparently, organized medicine has become so imbued with specialization, drugs, self-importance, and political action that they have neglected the precepts of the father of medicine, Hippocrates, in the most ancient and orthodox principle of health. Concerned medical men have stated that the AMA has brainwashed most of its members in regard to food deficiencies and has done nothing for several decades to ensure the education of their doctors in regard to whole nutrition.

In the early 1940s, Dr. Charles Northen, who had learned about nutrition through his clinical practice as a recognized medical authority on stomach diseases, reported to a U.S. Senate committee as follows:

> "The alarming fact is that foods, fruits, vegetables and grains being raised on millions of acres of land no longer contain enough of certain needed minerals; are starving us, no matter how much of them we eat. No man of today can eat enough fruits and vegetables to supply his system with the mineral salts he requires for perfect health because his stomach isn't big enough to hold them."

It now appears that the orthodox views of their founder, regarding nutrition and health, are no longer acceptable to many medical doctors although, according to health statistics, the treating of effects rather than causes has apparently contributed to a national health crisis. Medical testimony given in the presence of a Senate committee, at the White House Conference on Food and Nutrition, emphasized the deplorable inadequacy of nutritional education in medical and allied schools. Proof of disinterest was further emphasized on October 22nd, when the Federal Election Commission released figures to show the special interest money contributed in our Presidential Primary election. The AMA's Political Action Committee and affiliated local action committees contributed $1,294,060 to nominate friendly candidates and preserve the status quo. Apparently, they will continue the nonsensical treating of symptoms rather than seek the cause.

Not long ago, Dr. Ernest Wynder advised the House Subcommittee on Public Health and Environment: "The medical profession for its part must recognize that in the ever-increasing treatment of symptomatic illnesses, we have failed in their prevention." We feel it makes more sense to keep well people well than to find ways and means to make sick people well.

Recently Tufts University President Jean Mayer, a noted nutritionist, stated:

> "Most of our major causes of death and disability—heart disease and stroke, high blood pressure, adult-onset diabetes, liver and kidney diseases—either result from faulty nutrition, or from a combination of factors that include poor nutrition. These diseases are far easier to prevent than to cure and are often interrelated… What's more, only a small group of foods or nutrients contribute to the development of these conditions."

Usually it's the missing nutrients or those in insufficient amounts, possibly due to an imbalance.

Lost Nutrients at Fault

The nutrients we are *not getting* in our food may be at fault in many of these degenerative diseases. Some investigations now indicate that much of the present malnutrition is not due to a low protein diet, but may be due to a lack, loss of, or imbalance of the trace elements similar to the ones that were there naturally 200 years ago. As for the bicentennial commercial "And that's the way it was," we must reply, *not any more*.

Often demonstrated in the diet of domestic animals is a deficiency of calcium and phosphorus in the food supply. Or a loss of balance could be caused by processing or by chemical additives. Phosphorus is found in our body as a phosphorized protein in all cells and tissues and is now designated in this form as nucleoprotein. It exists in the brain, nerve, and spinal tissue as cephalin and in other tissues as the phosphorized fat called lecithin. Egg yolk and commercially discarded germ of corn, barley, rice, and wheat are particularly rich in this form of phosphorus. However, less highly organized forms of phosphorus utilized by the body are the phytin compounds, or phytates. Abundant quantities of phytins are found in nuts, legumes, and cereal grains such as corn, barley, buckwheat, oats, rice, and wheat in their natural unrefined state. Dr. Klevay determined that in all probability the fiber and phytic acid combined to bind some dietary zinc and carry it to excretion. Previous investigation has revealed that fiber tends to lower blood cholesterol, as the pectin and lignin (cellulose) combine with bile salts (which degrade cholesterol) and stimulate a healthy excretion of cholesterol in the stool. This is the normal way.

Food processors' propaganda notwithstanding, the so-called low-fat diets have done little to lower serum cholesterol. But, when refined sugar and white bleached flour are added to the diets of animals and humans, the blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels are raised and hypertension occurs. These two commodities are pure carbohydrates that have lost their balancing factors, namely, fats, proteins, minerals, vitamins, and necessary nondigestible fibers. Substitute and chemicalized foods are missing the natural ingredients that can be properly metabolized to promote cellular health and maintenance.

Good Eating?

Not for the "Now" generation. We suggest you use a magnifying glass to study the chemically listed ingredients in a restaurant-supplied liquid substitute for cream. To further show you the present trend in manufactured foods we are herewith listing the ingredients in a 3 oz., conveniently packaged, restaurant-sized, ready-to-eat, artificially flavored:

Butterscotch Pudding (?)

It contains water, sugar, vegetable fat, nonfat milk solids, starch, sodium caseinate, dextrose, salt, artificial color, potassium sorbate (a preservative), sodium steroyl-2-lactate, calcium carrageenan, polysorbate 60, sodium alginate, sorbitan monostearate, xanthan gum, guar gum, artificial flavor, sodium acid pyrophosphate.

The colonist's food was not chemicalized. Do these chemicals inhibit enzyme formation? Are they cumulative? Are they more harmful in combination with other chemical additives, especially the chlorine and fluorine in our water, coffee, tea, beer, soft drinks and ice cubes? Who knows?

Apparently, these highly advertised substitutes for natural foods are engineered for *shelf life only*. Presumptively, *your life receives little consideration*.

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